

American

NEWS & VIEWS

A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy

September 17, 2004

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Text: U.S. Releases Annual Narcotics Certification Report

Burma not meeting counternarcotics obligations, White House says

President Bush has authorized Secretary of State Colin Powell to submit the annual report listing major illicit drug-producing and drug-transit countries to Congress. According to a September 16 White House press release, the report also contains presidential determinations of countries that have not met their international counternarcotics obligations.

In the report, the President identified Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, and Vietnam as major drug-transit or major illicit drug-producing countries, in a grouping also known as the "Majors List."

Following are texts of a statement by the Press Secretary and a Presidential memorandum authorizing the Secretary of State to submit his determinations to Congress:

September 16, 2004

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

*Annual Presidential Determinations of
Major Illicit Drug-Producing and Drug-Transit Countries*

President Bush has authorized the Secretary of State to submit to Congress the annual report listing major illicit drug-producing and drug-transit countries (known as the "Majors List"). The same report contains Presidential determinations of the countries that have "failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts" during the previous 12 months to adhere to international counternarcotics agreements and take the counternarcotics measures specified in U.S. law.

As in previous years, this year's certification determinations required the President to consider each country's performance in areas such as reducing illicit cultivation, interdiction, and law enforcement cooperation; extraditing drug traffickers; and taking legal steps and law enforcement measures to prevent and punish public corruption that facilitates drug trafficking or impedes prosecution of drug-related crimes. The President also had to consider efforts taken by these countries to stop production and export of, and reduce the domestic demand for, illegal drugs.

In his report, the President identified as major drug-transit or major illicit drug-producing countries: Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

The President removed Thailand from the list of major drug-transit or major illicit drug-producing countries. Thailand's opium poppy cultivation is well below the levels specified in Section 706(1) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2002-2003 (P.L. 107-228) (the FRAA); no heroin processing laboratories have been found in Thailand for several years, and Thailand is no longer a significant direct source of illicit narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances significantly affecting the United States; nor is it a country through which are transported such drugs or substances.

The President also reported to Congress his determination that Burma failed demonstrably, during the previous 12 months, to adhere to its obligations under international counternarcotics agreements and to take the measures set forth in U.S. law.

The President noted that, in sharp contrast to the Government of Haiti's dismal performance last year under the Aristide regime, the New Interim Government of Haiti headed by Prime Minister Latortue, has taken substantive -- if limited -- counternarcotics actions in the few months it has been in office. The President remains concerned, however, about the ability of Haitian law enforcement to reorganize and restructure sufficiently to carry out sustained counternarcotics efforts.

The President cited decreased use of MDMA (ecstasy) among young people in the United States as a hopeful sign, but continues to place priority on stopping the threat of club drugs, including MDMA, of which the Netherlands continues to be the dominant source country. He characterized the Government of the Netherlands as an enthusiastic and capable partner, and commended its efforts. He continues to be concerned, however, by obstacles to mutual legal assistance and extradition from the Netherlands and cited a need to work more deliberately to disrupt the criminal organizations responsible for the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs. Specifically, he urged enhanced use of financial investigations, and anti-money laundering statutes to identify and dismantle trafficking organizations.

While the vast majority of illicit drugs entering the United States continues to come from South America and Mexico, the President expressed his continuing concerns about the

flow of illicit drugs from Canada. He commended Canada for its successful efforts to curb the diversion of precursor chemicals used in methamphetamine production, and noted that we are now working intensively with Canadian authorities to address the increase in the smuggling of Canadian-produced marijuana into the United States. The President said, however, that he was concerned the consideration of cannabis reform legislation could be an invitation to greater activity by organized crime and can undermine law enforcement and prosecutorial efforts.

The President reported that, although Nigeria arrested a trafficker wanted by the United States; met the modest, agreed upon interdiction targets; and put measures in place to increase the effectiveness of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency; counternarcotics efforts continue to be undermined by pervasive corruption. He said Nigeria must take significant and decisive action to investigate and prosecute political corruption, and to increase transparency if it is to combat corruption effectively.

Despite good faith efforts on the part of the central Afghanistan Government, the President reported his concerns about the increased opium crop production and the Government's lack of capacity to prevail in the provinces.

The President expressed deep concerns about heroin and methamphetamine linked to North Korea being trafficked to East Asian countries; the high likelihood state agents and enterprises in North Korea are involved in the narcotics trade; and that there are clear indications that North Koreans traffic in, and probably manufacture, methamphetamine.

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September 15, 2004
Presidential Determination
No. 2004-47

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: Presidential Determination on Major Drug Transit or Major Illicit Drug Producing Countries for FY05

Pursuant to section 706(1) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107-228) (FRAA), I hereby identify the following countries as major drug-transit or major illicit drug producing countries: Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti,

India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

The Majors List applies by its terms to "countries." The United States Government interprets the term broadly to include entities that exercise autonomy over actions or omissions that could lead to a decision to place them on the list and, subsequently, to determine their eligibility for certification.

A country's presence on the Majors List is not necessarily an adverse reflection of its government's counternarcotics efforts or level of cooperation with the United States. Consistent with the statutory definition of a major drug-transit or drug-producing country set forth in section 481(e)(5) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), one of the reasons that major drug-transit or illicit drug producing countries are placed on the list is the combination of geo-graphical, commercial, and economic factors that allow drugs to transit or be produced despite the concerned government's most assiduous enforcement measures.

Pursuant to section 706(2)(A) of the FRAA, I hereby designate Burma as a country that has failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to adhere to its obligations under inter-national counternarcotics agreements and take the measures set forth in section 489(a)(1) of the FAA. Attached to this report is a justification (statement of explanation) for the determination on Burma, as required by section 706(2)(B).

I have removed Thailand from the list of major drug-transit or major illicit drug producing countries. Thailand's opium poppy cultivation is well below the levels specified in the FRAA; no heroin processing laboratories have been found in Thailand for several years, and Thailand is no longer a significant direct source of illicit narcotic or psychotropic drugs or other controlled substances significantly affecting the United States; nor is it a country through which such drugs or substances are transported.

In contrast to the Government of Haiti's dismal performance last year under the Aristide regime, the new Interim Government of Haiti (IGOH), headed by Prime Minister Latortue, has taken substantive -- if limited - counternarcotics actions in the few months it has been in office.

Nevertheless, we remain deeply concerned about the ability of Haitian law enforcement to reorganize and restructure sufficiently to carry out sustained counternarcotics efforts.

The decreased use of MDMA (Ecstasy) among young people in the United States is a hopeful sign, but we continue to place priority on stopping the threat of club drugs, including MDMA, of which The Netherlands continues to be the dominant source country. The Government of The Netherlands is an enthusiastic and capable partner, and we commend its efforts. We continue to be concerned, however, by obstacles to mutual legal assistance and extradition from The Netherlands. There is a need to work more deliberately to disrupt the criminal organizations responsible for the production and trafficking of synthetic drugs.

Specifically, we urge enhanced use of financial investigation, including full exploitation of anti-money laundering statutes and financial investigators to identify and dismantle trafficking organizations, and to seize and forfeit the assets acquired from the drug trade.

While the vast majority of illicit drugs entering the United States continue to come from South America and Mexico, we remain concerned about the substantial flow of illicit drugs from Canada. I commend Canada for its successful efforts to curb the diversion of precursor chemicals used in methamphetamine production.

We are now working intensively with Canadian authorities to address the increase in the smuggling of Canadian-produced marijuana into the United States; however we are concerned the lack of significant judicial sanctions against marijuana producers is resulting in greater involvement in the burgeoning marijuana industry by organized criminal groups. Canada has expressed concern to us about the flow of cocaine and other illicit substances through the United States into Canada. United States and Canadian law enforcement personnel have collaborated on a number of investigations that have led to the dismantling of several criminal organizations. The two governments will continue to work closely in the year ahead to confront these shared threats.

Nigeria put measures in place to increase the effectiveness of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, and also arrested a trafficker wanted by the United States, which met the agreed-upon interdiction targets. However, Nigeria must take significant and decisive action to investigate and prosecute political corruption, which continues to undermine the transparency of its government. President Obasanjo took steps to address corruption at the G-8 meetings in Sea Island, Georgia, by entering into a Compact to Promote Transparency and Combat Corruption. Positive transparent measures will in turn benefit Nigeria's anti-narcotics efforts, the rule of law, and all democratic institutions.

Despite good faith efforts on the part of the central Afghanistan government, we are concerned about increased opium crop production in the provinces.

We are deeply concerned about heroin and methamphetamine linked to North Korea being trafficked to East Asian countries. We consider it highly likely that state agents and enterprises in North Korea are involved in the narcotics trade.

While we know that some opium poppy is cultivated in North Korea, reliable information confirming the extent of opium production is currently lacking. There are also clear indications that North Koreans traffic in, and probably manufacture, methamphetamine. In recent years, authorities in the region have routinely seized shipments of methamphetamine and/or heroin that had been transferred to traffickers' ships from North Korean vessels. The April 2003 seizure of 125 kilograms of heroin smuggled to Australia aboard the North Korean-owned vessel "Pong Su" is the latest and largest seizure of heroin pointing to North Korean complicity in the drug trade. Although there is no evidence that narcotics originating in or transiting North Korea reach the United States, we are working closely with our partners in the region to stop North Korean involvement in illicit narcotics production and trafficking.

We appreciate the efforts of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and others in the region to stop the diversion of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine used to manufacture methamphetamine. However, considering the growing methamphetamine problem in North America and Asia, additional collaborative efforts to control these precursor chemicals are necessary.

You are hereby authorized and directed to submit this report under section 706 of the FRAA, transmit it to the Congress, and publish it in the Federal Register

GEORGE W. BUSH

Religious Freedom Report Adds Vietnam to Severe Violators List

(China, Burma, North Korea redesignated "countries of particular concern")

By Susan Krause, Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Imprisonment of individuals, church closures, forced renunciations of faith, and other infringements led the State Department to add Vietnam to a list of "countries of particular concern" in its 6th Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, according to

John Hanford, the department's ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom.

Hanford briefed journalists September 15 on the release of the annual report to Congress, which is mandated by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

This year's report marks the first time that Vietnam has been included among the serious violators referred to as countries of particular concern (CPC). Three other countries in the Asia-Pacific region -- China, Burma, and North Korea -- were among countries that had been designated CPCs before and were redesignated this year.

"Before designating a government a CPC, we undertake an intensive consideration of the status of religious freedom violations in that country," Hanford said. "When possible, we also engage in vigorous and high level diplomacy with authorities in that country, describing to them the religious freedom violations that place them at the threshold of designation and suggesting specific steps they can take to improve religious freedom and avoid designation."

Hanford said he and his staff had engaged in "intense discussions" with Vietnamese officials over a lengthy period, and had tried to avoid making the designation. But he cited the imprisonment of over 45 religious believers, including members of the Buddhist, Catholic, Protestant, Hoa Hao, and Cao Dai faiths, as well as the closure of hundreds of places of worship in the Central and Northwest Highlands as justification for the country's downgraded status.

The ambassador also expressed concern about attempts by local and central government officials in Vietnam to force individuals to renounce their faith, often under physical duress.

"We have asked the government, who tells us that this is not the policy of the government, to simply make...a public policy clear to everyone in the country that this will not be tolerated," Hanford said. "And they have not been willing to do this."

Emphasizing the generally cooperative relationship between the United States and Vietnam, Hanford praised the Vietnamese government for taking some "positive steps" to improve religious freedom. He noted that Vietnamese officials had twice reduced the sentence of Father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, a Roman Catholic priest and human rights activist, and reopened a small number of churches in the Central Highlands.

But Hanford said these actions were insufficient to avoid CPC designation. He urged further action and called for the release of Father Ly, who was sentenced to 15 years in solitary confinement in 2001 and now is in poor health.

China, Burma, and North Korea have been designated for severe violations in previous years. According to the religious freedom report, the Chinese government continues to repress Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, and Falun Gong, with believers facing imprisonment, beatings, torture, and destruction of places of worship.

"Many observers believe that in recent months, China has engaged in a crackdown against some independent religious groups," Hanford said.

The report cites the Burmese military regime for imprisoning Buddhist monks, threatening Christian clergy with arrest, and destroying churches and mosques, Hanford said. Muslims in Burma have faced "state-orchestrated or -tolerated violence," he added.

North Korea, according to the report, imprisons, tortures, and even executes religious believers for their faith. "In North Korea, religious freedom simply does not exist," Hanford said.

The International Religious Freedom Act requires the Bush administration to come up with a plan of action for countries of particular concern within 90 to 180 days of their designation as CPCs. These actions, according to the legislation, might include a private or public demarche, public condemnation, cancellation or restriction of scientific or cultural exchanges, delay or cancellation of official or state visits, or limitations or suspension of development assistance.

Hanford said the process for determining what action to take is "complicated."

"There's a lot of flexibility given to the secretary of state in this process," he said, "but no consideration at this point has been given to this."

U.S. Pressing U.N. Security Council for Vote on Darfur

Secretary-general urges council to act

By Judy Aita, Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- Submitting a revised version of its draft Security Council resolution on Sudan, the United States

September 16 pressed for a vote quickly, saying that time is critical in the race to save lives in Darfur.

The revised text still contains the basic points of the original draft that was first submitted September 9, endorsing an expanded, proactive African Union (AU) monitoring mission and asking the United Nations to establish an international commission to investigate reports that genocide has been committed in Darfur.

U.S. Ambassador John Danforth said that the key points of the resolution are "getting the AU in and providing maximum support for it; also, calling for the parties to get back to the table in Naivasha and complete the North-South agreement; and calling for the world to meet its commitments with respect to the funding for humanitarian relief."

The new draft is "essentially the same as what we've had before," the ambassador said. "We always attempt to accommodate people where we can and listen to people's thoughts and incorporate them where it is possible to do that" during negotiations.

The council scheduled a private meeting on the revised draft, but no date has been set for a vote. Nevertheless, Danforth said that he hoped the vote would take place before the week ended because "time is of the essence.....When the reports are 10,000 people are dying every month, then every day counts."

As the council was discussing the revisions, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in an unusual move, made a strong plea for the council to act, saying, "It is urgent to take action now."

"Civilians are still being attacked and fleeing their villages even as we speak, many months after the government committed itself to bring the militias under control. The cease-fire is also being violated by both groups. Both sides have to stop violating the cease-fire," he said.

"I have urged the Security Council to act on the draft resolution without delay and to be as united as possible in the face of this crisis," Annan told journalists. "This is the first time in the council's history that it has ever been seized under Article 8 of the Genocide Convention, and it seems to me inconceivable that it should fail to respond."

The council must be fully engaged, the secretary-general said, and appealed to all member states and organizations with the needed logistical and financial capabilities to do whatever they can to make the AU deployment happen as quickly as possible.

The secretary-general also said that he asked High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour and U.N. special adviser on the prevention of genocide Juan Mendes to visit Darfur immediately to see what can be done now and in the future to provide better protection for civilians. "Their job is not to describe or characterize what is happening, but to see what more can be done to stop it, and to prevent further abuses," Annan said.

A U.S. spokesman said that the changes in the new draft reflect an attempt to give "some credit -- and I emphasize some credit -- where credit was due to the Government of Sudan" for improving humanitarian access. But the new draft retains the demand that Sudan submit the names of Jingaweit militia and others arrested for human rights abuses and calls on all Sudanese parties to take the necessary steps to ensure that human rights violations reported by the African Union monitors are addressed.

Also retained in the draft resolution is the threat of "additional actions," which could include an oil embargo and/or sanctions against members of the Sudanese government, if Khartoum doesn't comply with the resolutions or fails to cooperate with the African Union monitoring mission. It says the council will make that determination "after consultations with the African Union."

The new draft also "urges the Government of Sudan to refrain from conducting military flights in and over the Darfur region in accordance with its commitments," replacing language requiring Sudan to stop all military flights over the Darfur region.

The change on the military flights "clearly was 'a give' on our side," the U.S. spokesman said. "We are not comfortable with this ... it is not as strong as we wanted it to be," but the change was an attempt to keep the council united.

Nevertheless, the spokesman said, in Resolution 1556 "it is very clear that it is unlawful to attack civilians by land or air" and that revised paragraph is a reference to the cease-fire agreement and restates the fact that such attacks are still illegal.

Senate Appropriators Approve \$175 Million for Aid to Darfur

(Panel also votes to boost funding for AIDS, decrease it for MCA)
By Kathryn McConnell, Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved \$175 million for emergency aid to the Darfur region of Sudan.

The Darfur provision is part of a \$19.5 billion foreign operations spending bill for the fiscal year beginning October 1 (FY05). The bill would boost funds to combat AIDS and other infectious diseases in poor countries but decrease by more than half the amount the Bush administration requested for its new foreign aid fund, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).

The measure that would increase foreign operations spending by \$2 billion over the 2004 level was approved in committee 29-0. The \$19.5 billion amount is \$2 billion less than the administration's request and slightly more than the amount approved by the House of Representatives in July.

The approved amount for refugee, famine and disaster relief in the Darfur region augments the \$95 million for Darfur emergency relief Congress appropriated earlier this year in the 2005 defense spending bill. Darfur is experiencing civil conflict that Secretary of State Colin Powell has described as "genocide" by the Sudanese government against its citizens.

The approved amount to combat AIDS -- \$2.4 billion -- is \$220 million more than President Bush's request and the amount approved by the House.

Under the Senate bill, the MCA would receive \$1.1 billion; the administration had requested \$2.5 billion. The House foreign operations bill also approved less than half the administration request for MCA.

MCA, a supplemental aid program announced by President Bush in 2002, rewards select developing countries for progress in opening their economies and adopting human rights and democratization policies. The fund's administrative agency, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), has already named 16 qualifying countries and is expected to name more later in 2004, according to news reports.

State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher September 15 said the Millennium Challenge initiative is already having an impact. In countries that have been selected for eligibility, he said, "governments are conducting unprecedented consultations with their societies to identify development priorities. In countries that have not yet been selected but are striving to qualify for funding in future years, governments are implementing bold reform programs."

The spending bill will next be taken up by the full Senate or be rolled into an omnibus spending bill with other still unfinished appropriations measures for 2005. Differences between Senate and House versions of a spending bill then

need to be reconciled before a final bill is sent to the president for signature.

Transcript: Iraqis, U.N. and Coalition Determined to Ensure Iraqi Elections

Secretary Powell speaks to al-Arabiya about topics concerning Arab world

Iraqi leaders, the United Nations and the coalition forces are united in their determination to see Iraq move forward with elections, according to Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"Most parts of the country are secure enough and stable enough that you could begin the registration of people and begin the election process. And our commanders will be working very hard to defeat these insurgents, so even in the difficult areas, such as in the Sunni triangle, they will also have an opportunity to vote," Powell told *al-Arabiya* television during a September 15 interview.

The secretary addressed a variety of topics relevant to the Arab world during his discussion with *al-Arabiya's* Lukman Ahmed.

When asked why the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2004 offered strong criticism of Saudi Arabia despite the Saudi government's efforts to pursue a dialog with its Shi'a minority, Powell responded that the report was not intended to punish the Saudis or convey displeasure but simply "to state a fact" regarding the general status of religious freedom in Saudi Arabia, as the report does for every other country in the world.

Powell said the United States appreciates the efforts the Saudis have made with respect to reform and tolerance and he hopes an open and friendly dialog with the Saudi leaders will encourage that government to move in a direction where Saudi Arabia would no longer be listed as a "country of particular concern."

Turning to the Lebanese parliament's recent decision, under Syrian pressure, to modify the constitution and extend the mandate of President Emile Lahoud, Powell reaffirmed the United States' concern with the Syrian government's interference in domestic Lebanese affairs.

He said U.N. Security Council resolution 1599 allowed the international community to go on the record telling the Lebanese people, "You deserve to have a change of government in accordance with your constitution and not have to amend your constitution because another country wishes you to amend your constitution."

He said he hopes the Syrians will listen to the concerns of the international community and the Lebanese people and begin to remove their forces from Lebanon.

Regarding developments in Sudan, Powell said that he had carefully studied the situation and concluded that it was time for the U.N. Security Council to become involved. "We are not trying to punish the Sudanese government," he said. "What we want of the Sudanese government is to respond, bring the Jingaweit under control, stop their activities, stop the gunship helicopters that are in the air destroying villages and to act as a responsible government."

In response to questions about the peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians, Powell said the United States remains committed to the roadmap and added that he believes the Israelis remain committed as well. He said it is up to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian people to empower a prime minister with the ability to fulfill the Palestinians' obligations under the agreements.

Powell also offered his condolences to the family of al-Arabiya reporter Mazin Tumaizi, who was killed when a U.S. helicopter destroyed an American armored vehicle that had been disabled by an explosive device. Tumaizi was preparing to report on the disabling of the vehicle when the helicopter struck to eliminate the ammunition on board.

Following is the transcript of Powell's interview:

MR. AHMED: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for this opportunity, and we will start today with the religious freedom reports that you have just issued. After the report, the State Department said that Saudi Arabia is a great ally and cooperating with the United States of America on war and terrorists, getting that the Crown Prince Abdullah's Government in tolerance and working and there is a dialogue with the Shia there. Is it not enough for Saudi Arabia not to be mentioned in this report?

SECRETARY POWELL: Saudi Arabia is a great friend of the United States and has been for many years and we have nothing but the highest respect for the Crown Prince and the Government of Saudi Arabia. We have worked together in so many areas. We are very pleased at some of the efforts that the Saudi Arabian Government has been making with respect to reform and tolerance.

I have an obligation under American law to examine each country in the world with respect to religious freedom in those countries. And with respect to Saudi Arabia, we have been in discussion with them for some time and I was required under our law, based on the situation within the

Kingdom, to at least designate them as a Country of Particular Concern.

This is not to punish them, or in any way to show displeasure but to state a fact, and hopefully, through an open dialogue with them, see if there are not ways to move in this direction where it would not be necessary for me to make such a determination or such a distinction against Saudi Arabia. But one should not see this as anything but two friends talking to one another about a problem of mutual concern.

Let me take this opportunity, if I may, to, again, on behalf of the United States Government, express my regrets, my deepest sympathy and my condolences to the Tumaizi family, your reporter, who lost his life tragically.

MR. AHMED: Thank you.

SECRETARY POWELL: He was a brave man. And so many of those journalists there put themselves in harm's way to bring the facts to people of the world and a number of them have lost their lives and I deeply regret any lives lost.

MR. AHMED: And we appreciate that, Mr. Secretary, and that will lead us to Iraq, and he was a fair journalist (inaudible), among other journalists. (Inaudible) are being really criticized in Iraq regarding the deportation of journalists over there. Do you think you will do more to ensure the journalists' safety in Iraq?

SECRETARY POWELL: We will do everything we can, but journalism in a war zone is a risky profession because to do the job properly a journalist has to go out where there is action, so he can and she can report on that action. Obviously, there was no intention of injuring anybody, much less a journalist. The military authorities were trying to deal with the problem of ammunition in the burning vehicle, to get rid of the ammunition, so it would not become available to insurgents or a danger to citizens. And nobody did this with any intention of harming innocent civilians, especially journalists.

And so, it's a dangerous profession. It's a noble profession. It's a needed profession and we'll do everything we can, but ultimately there is a serious element of danger associated with being a correspondent in a war zone.

MR. AHMED: And this also will leave us in Iraq about this tradition of violence and military war there in Iraq, in Fallujah and other areas. There is a Turkish concern over residence of Turkomen on Telafar. It seems like there is a deadlock for American troop in Iraq.

SECRETARY POWELL: I wouldn't call it a deadlock. I would say that the forces that want to go back to the past, those insurgents who don't want to see an election. They don't want to see the Iraqi people decide their own future. They want to go back to dictatorship. These forces are now doing everything they can to defeat the incoming government and to defeat the prospects of having free and fair elections at the end of the year, and the ones who are going to be defeated are the insurgents.

We expected that the intensity of their attack would increase during this period after the interim government took over and moved toward elections. And we're slowly restoring control in those areas where control is lost. Telafar, you mentioned, I have been in touch with the Turkish Government. I know the concerns they had there. That situation is under control. The citizens are moving back in. The Turkmen are moving back into a city that is now under the control of the government, not under the control of insurgents.

Places like Najaf and Kufa, we have got government control back and we are slowly starting to work in Samarra and the other cities in the Sunni triangle, where there is too strong an insurgent presence, will be taken back, taken back by coalition forces increasingly by the capable forces of the Iraqi Government.

MR. AHMED: And you mentioned the election in Iraq. It's fair enough to say a majority of Iraqis are waiting for that day to come of the election. The conditions we see there in Iraq, heavy casualties on the civilians because of the violence there -- I'm not talking about the American military action, obviously -- how do you think, I mean, that -- and it's increasing on a daily basis -- the election would be held? And do you think there are measures that will ensure the election will be held in that day and fair enough to bring a new government after all of this?

SECRETARY POWELL: I think we know how to hold a fair election, and most parts of the country are secure enough and stable enough that you could begin the registration of people and begin the election process. And our commanders will be working very hard to defeat these insurgents, so even in the difficult areas, such as in the Sunni triangle, they will also have an opportunity to vote.

But the coalition leaders, but more importantly, the Iraqi Interim Government, President Sheikh Ghazi and Prime Minister Allawi and their whole cabinet are determined to go forward. The national council, which is now in place, is determined to go forward. The UN is determined to go forward and have these elections. It is a necessary step toward putting in place a solid democracy in Iraq and

allowing that democracy to thrive, building up armed forces. And that's how the coalition will be able to leave.

MR. AHMED: We are going to the other area. I just came from a Sudan area and this week you concluded that after the investigation, investigation on the Sudan, the situation there, the genocide that's occur and you called UN to investigate. Do you think the UN will reach the same conclusion?

And the other question about that, how do you think you could do toward those responsible of these atrocities, accountable?

SECRETARY POWELL: Well, we examined it very, very carefully. I did not do it just at the spur of the moment or in the heat of the moment. I felt it was important for us to make an objective examination, so we sent people in with outsiders to talk to the people of Darfur and we interviewed over 1,000 people and got the facts. And those facts made it clear to us that this was a deliberate policy on the part of the Jingaweit working with the government, and so that's why we called it genocide. And now we call on the UN to make a broader investigation.

The Genocide Convention really required us, as a state party, to bring it to the attention of the United Nations and that's what we have done. And we hope that the Security Council resolution that we are working on in New York will include in that resolution the paragraph that deals with a broader investigation by the United Nations.

We also have in that resolution the possibility of sanctions, measures to put more pressure on the Sudanese Government to do more with respect to security. We are not trying to punish the Sudanese Government. What we want of the Sudanese Government is to respond, bring the Jingaweit under control, stop their activities, stop the gunship helicopters that are in the air destroying villages and to act as a responsible government.

We are pleased that the Sudanese Government has allowed the flow of humanitarian aid to go in. It's much improved. They have allowed the AU monitors to go in with a protection force. And I hope more AU personnel will be able to go in. And the Sudanese Government is participating in the political discussions that are taking place with the rebels in Abuja, Nigeria.

So that's all positive. That's moving in the right direction. Now we need the Sudanese Government to move in the right direction with respect to stopping the violence and securing the countryside so people can go back to their homes.

MR. AHMED: But there are some --

SECRETARY POWELL: If I may just --

MR. AHMED: Yes.

SECRETARY POWELL: There is such an advantage for the Sudanese Government to do this because, as you know, we concluded the discussions on the north-south problem, the Lake Naivasha talks. A few more issues have to be worked out to get the comprehensive agreement, but with that comprehensive agreement and with peace in Darfur and the people of Darfur going home, all sorts of marvelous opportunities are opened up for the international community to work with the Sudanese Government to help them with their economic difficulties, to welcome them back into the international community from years of ostracism.

So I hope that we all will work together to complete the north-south agreement, solve the Darfurian problem and help the Sudanese people -- all Sudanese people -- to a better future.

MR. AHMED: We go to another area in the Middle East, Syria and Lebanon, the influence of Syria on the Lebanese over the presidency, this time, especially, heavily divided the Lebanese. And how does the U.S. view this, especially after Resolution 1599?

SECRETARY POWELL: Well, as you know, worked with France as a co-sponsor, and other nations, to get this resolution passed. We felt it was time for the international community to get on record and say to the world and say to the Lebanese people, "You deserve to have a change of government in accordance with your constitution and not have to amend your constitution because another country wishes you to amend your constitution."

And we also believe that the time is passed when the Syrians should review their policies with respect to Lebanon and begin to remove their forces, remove the Syrian army and let the Lebanese people be responsible for their own destiny. And I am pleased that the Security Council did pass this resolution and I hope the Syrians are studying this resolution and are listening to what the people of Lebanon are saying.

MR. AHMED: But that resolution seems to be very big, after it -- the Syrian troops still in Lebanon. The Lebanese Parliament with the help of Syrian influence. They amend their constitution and they granted President Lahud another three years (inaudible) and most majority of Lebanese are disappointed by that. We know that Syria has

Secretary General for the UN when he come to the area this October, but nothing seems to be happening and they're disappointed in these people.

And while you are talking about democracy in the Middle East that influence that, and many people are believing that -- they believe you are not doing enough on Syria and Lebanon.

SECRETARY POWELL: Well, it's a very complex issue and it's a case where you look at what you can do. And in this instance, what we thought the best thing for us to do was to put the international community on the record that this is not acceptable practice.

Now, we did not expect that the Syrians would read the resolution and the next day remove their army. But I think based on conversations that my diplomats have had with the Syrians, they understand that the international community is concerned about this and we did not find it to be a satisfactory or the right thing to do to insist that a constitution be modified just to keep a particular individual in place at the request of a foreign country.

And so the international community is on record and these things sometimes take time to work themselves out. I hope the Syrians are studying the resolution and understand that it is time for them to take another look at the policies they have been following for so many years with respect to Lebanon.

MR. AHMED: All right, I have a limited time and I am going to Israel-Palestine, to their Prime Minister Sharon, after the funeral for Tumaizi and after this he pulled -- or he pulled back from Gaza for settlement from West Bank. It's more likely he will stay there in the West Bank, and Muslim not too happy over there, really. It's a disappointment there about the sentiment in the Middle East there. What do you think of this?

SECRETARY POWELL: I haven't read his exact statement, but all the information I have, and I have met with Israeli officials in the past day or so, lead me to believe that the Prime Minister is still committed to the roadmap. That is what he said to the President of the United States. And President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon went out in April here and read their statements with the understanding that the disengagement from Gaza and the beginning of disengagement from West Bank settlements all was part of the roadmap process, no final status issues have been resolved except through ultimate negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

And so, the roadmap is intact. The Quartet will be meeting informally next week and we'll work at the UN to discuss

where we are and our best information that Israel is still committed to its obligations under the roadmap. And they expect the Palestinians to meet their obligations under the roadmap.

MR. AHMED: Secretary Powell, it seems that you are not engaging enough with the Palestinians to help them to bring out with a credible partner. We have a Prime Minister right now there and he is fighting Mr. Arafat over many issues. The United States of America are not -- you do not mean that Prime Minister and he is just working on one without the help -- we remember the kind of help you provided to the other prime minister was here and Dahlan and other people, and he's like empty-handed right now.

What kind of effort the U.S. could give to the Palestinian Authority (inaudible)?

SECRETARY POWELL: We have worked with Prime Minister Abu Mazen before Prime Minister Abu Alaa and we are in touch with Prime Minister Abu Alaa. We are working with him. We are working with the Egyptians to help him.

But the fundamental problem is not what the United States can do, it's what the Palestinians are going to do...what the Palestinian Authority going to do? Mr. Abu Alaa needs authority and needs control of the security forces under him, and this has to come from Mr. Arafat and from the Palestinian legislature. And so it is hard for us to assist the Prime Minister until the Prime Minister is able to wrest some, get some authority from Mr. Arafat so he can perform.

The President of the United States, President Bush, went to Aqaba last summer and he stood there with Prime Minister Abu Mazen, plus Prime Minister Sharon, brought them together, recommitted themselves to the roadmap, and said: Fine, we're now moving. Prime Minister I asked for this in my 24 June 2002 speech that we needed a responsible prime minister to engage with so the Israelis can engage with somebody.

But I'm afraid that Mr. Arafat never gave Abu Mazen the authority he needed to operate and therefore we couldn't get it started. I'm afraid the same situation exists with Prime Minister Abu Alaa, who we know every few weeks offers his resignation saying I can't do what I need to do unless I get this authority.

And the United States can't make that happen. This has to be a decision, a judgment made by the Palestinian Authority, by the Palestinian people, to empower a prime

minister who can be a responsible partner for security in Gaza, for negotiations with the Israelis.

We still have a golden opportunity before us. For the first time, this Prime Minister, Prime Minister Sharon, has said he is eliminating settlements in occupied territories beginning in Gaza and four more in the West Bank to get started. That's not the end of it. That's the beginning of it. And I hope that the Palestinians recognize that this is an opportunity that should not be lost.

MR. AHMED: Thank you so much, Secretary Powell.

SECRETARY POWELL: Thank you. It was my pleasure.

Fact Sheet: Ban on Human Cloning a U.S. Goal at United Nations

U.S. seeks to prevent "harvesting" of human embryos

The following is one of a series of seven fact sheets describing U.S. goals at the 59th session of the United Nations General Assembly:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Bureau of Public Affairs

TO BAN HUMAN CLONING

"As we seek to improve human life, we must always preserve human dignity. And therefore, we must prevent human cloning by stopping it before it starts."

-- President George W. Bush, April 10, 2002

The U.S. Position

The United States supports efforts to ban all forms of human cloning. Human cloning, for any purpose whatsoever, is unethical and morally reprehensible, and ignores respect for human dignity. At the 59th U.N. General Assembly, the United States will join a large group of nations co-sponsoring a resolution, proposed by Costa Rica, to draft an international convention against all human cloning.

What is Human Cloning?

The process commonly referred to as cloning (Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer) results in the creation of a human embryo. In "reproductive" cloning, this embryo is implanted into a woman's womb and allowed to grow. In what has been called "therapeutic," "research," and "experimental" cloning, the stem cells are removed from the embryo, destroying this nascent human life. A ban that

differentiates between human reproductive and experimental cloning would essentially authorize the creation of a human embryo for the purpose of killing it, thus elevating the value of research and experimentation above that of a human life. Experimental embryonic cloning would therefore turn nascent human life into a natural resource to be mined and exploited, eroding the sense of worth and dignity of the individual. A partial ban that prohibits reproductive cloning but permits therapeutic, research, or experimental cloning is unacceptable to the United States and many other countries.

Stem-Cell Therapy

The United States supports continued research into the promising field of stem-cell therapy. In the United States, both human embryonic stem-cell research and so-called "adult" stem-cell research are legal and both receive funding from the federal government. There are important ethical restrictions, however, placed on the use of federal funds to conduct human embryonic stem-cell research, to ensure that the funds do not encourage or support the further destruction of human embryos. Specifically, federally funded researchers may use only stem cells derived prior to the announcement of the policy; federally funded researchers may not use newly destroyed embryos to derive new stem-cell lines. The federal government also provides substantial support to adult stem-cell research, which does not require the destruction of human embryos. Within the last few years, a wealth of published scientific reports has demonstrated that adult stem cells --contained in tissues of the human body, and after birth in the umbilical cord and placenta -- have the ability to transform into other tissue and cell types, and have been shown to be able to repair and regenerate damaged and diseased tissue. Adult stem cells have already benefited hundreds of patients in clinical trials, for such conditions as heart damage, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and sickle-cell anemia. The potential for adult stem cells to advance medicine and alleviate human suffering is enormous.

The Support of All Nations Is Needed

Consenting to human cloning would be a step toward a society in which human beings are grown for spare body parts and children are engineered to fit eugenic specification. We cannot allow human life to be devalued in this way. We urge all nations to prohibit any research, experimentation, development, or application that is aimed at human cloning.

Text: National Science Foundation Announces Biology Awards

(Awardees include Australian, German and Japanese universities)

To tackle major questions in biology, the U.S. National Science Foundation has announced six new awards totaling nearly \$30 million over five years from its Frontiers in Integrative Biological Research (FIBR) program, according to a September 16 press release.

Each five-year award brings together scientists from many areas of biology and other fields to draw on advances in genomics, ecology, enhanced information technology and other fields to address significant understudied or unanswered questions in biology.

Along with U.S. universities, awardees include the University of Tasmania in Australia, the Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology in Germany, and the Saitama University in Japan.

Several FIBR awards focus on the relationship between an organism's genes and the outside world. One project will tackle the hotly debated nature or nurture question by analyzing social behavior as it relates to an entire genome -- that of the honey bee.

Another project will try to unravel ecological genomics, identifying genetic linkages that draw species together into complex communities and whole ecosystems.

Information about the program is available at <http://www.nsf.gov/bio/ef.htm>

Text of the press release follows:

National Science Foundation
Press release, September 16, 2004

NSF ANNOUNCES SIX 'FIBR' AWARDS TO TACKLE SOME OF BIOLOGY'S MOST CHALLENGING QUESTIONS

Multidisciplinary teams to study animal movement, genetic links to outside world

ARLINGTON, Va. -- How exactly do animals move? How do organisms adapt to newly acquired genes? What genetic forces draw members of an ecological community together? And does social behavior originate in nature, nurture or both? To tackle these and other major questions in biology, the National Science Foundation (NSF) today announced six new awards totaling nearly \$30 million over five years

from its Frontiers in Integrative Biological Research (FIBR) program.

Each of the five-year awards brings together scientists from many areas of biology and other fields to draw upon advances in genomics, ecology, enhanced information technology, and other fields -- not to mention a robotic cockroach - to address significant under-studied or unanswered questions in biology.

"FIBR is one of the premier, crosscutting programs in biology at NSF," said Mary Clutter, head of NSF's Biological Sciences directorate. "By undertaking highly innovative and broadly integrative approaches to research in biology, FIBR projects tackle grand challenges and promote the training of a new and fearless generation of scientists willing and able to bridge conventional disciplinary boundaries."

Several of this year's FIBR awards will focus on the relationship between an organism's genes and the outside world. One project will examine how a plant evaluates the various cues of seasonal change so that it blooms when it has the best chance to reproduce successfully. A second project will try to unravel "ecological genomics," identifying the genetic linkages that draw species together into complex communities and whole ecosystems.

Genes and environment both contribute to behavior, and another project will tackle the hotly debated nature or nurture question by analyzing social behavior as it relates to an entire genome -- that of the honey bee.

Scientists now know that up to a quarter of all genes in many organisms are acquired from completely unrelated species, and a fourth FIBR project will study the processes by which organisms adapt to these newly acquired genes.

To explain the complex signals and feedbacks among neurons, muscles, the skeleton and the whole body that make movement possible and prevent animals from falling over, another project will take a multidisciplinary approach to the study of live, simulated and robotic insects. The sixth FIBR project will undertake a study of photosynthesis to understand how large and complex networks of molecules arise, persist and evolve as modular units throughout biology.

The six FIBR projects integrate varied expertise from several universities and research institutes. Combined, the six projects support dozens of investigators from 15 U.S. states and also involve scientists supported by several other countries.

The FIBR projects announced today include the following:

"BeeSpace: An Interactive Environment for Analyzing Nature and Nurture in Societal Roles," examining how much of social behavior is determined by genes and how much is influenced by the environment -- University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

"Ecological Genomics and Heritability: Consequences of Extended Phenotypes," studying the genetic forces that draw together members of an ecological community -- Northern Arizona University (lead), University of Wisconsin, University of Tennessee, University of Tasmania (Australia)

"How Organisms Adapt to New Enzymes and New Pathways," understanding how organisms adapt to opportunities for rapid evolution through newly acquired genes -- Brandeis University (lead), Boston University, University of Michigan

"Molecular Evolutionary Ecology of Developmental Signaling Pathways in Complex Environments," examining how plants weigh the various cues of seasonal change to make timing choices that are right for their climate -- Brown University (lead), University of Wisconsin, North Carolina State University, Kansas State University, Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology (Germany)

"Neuromechanical Systems Biology," studying the complex signals and feedbacks among neurons, muscles, the skeleton and the whole body that make movement possible -- University of California, Berkeley (lead), Montana State University, University of Michigan, Cornell University, Princeton University

"A Systems Approach to Study Redox Regulation of Functions of Photosynthetic Organisms," studying how whole molecular networks may serve as modular units for function, regulation and evolution -- Washington University, St. Louis (lead), Colgate University, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Saitama University (Japan)

For more information see: NSF FIBR Program:
<http://www.nsf.gov/bio/ef.htm>

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering, with an annual budget of nearly \$5.58 billion. NSF funds reach all 50 states through grants to nearly 2,000 universities and institutions. Each year, NSF receives about 40,000 competitive requests for funding, and makes about 11,000 new funding awards. The NSF also awards over \$200 million in professional and service contracts yearly.

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